

Appl. No. 09/976,928
Amdt. Dated Jan. 19, 2005
Reply to Office Action Mailed October 19, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An expense management method for controlling a budget of at least one department in an organization, the expense management method comprising the steps of:

providing at least one terminal unit and a host connected to each of the terminal ~~units~~ unit via an electronic communications network;

storing a budget of the at least one department in the host;

sending a purchase requisition of one department from a terminal unit of that department to the host via the network;

calculating a current budget balance of the said one department according to the stored budget and a history of expenses of the said one department in the host; [[and]]

determining if a total cost of the purchase requisition exceeds [[a]] the current budget ~~surplus~~ balance of the said one department ~~as disclosed by the calculation of the current budget balance; and~~

reprocessing the purchase requisition if the purchase requisition exceeds the current budget balance of the said one department.

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Claim 2 (currently amended): The expense management method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

sending a purchase order to a supplier if the total cost of the purchase requisition is less than the current budget ~~surplus~~ balance of the said one department.

Claim 3 (original): The expense management method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

sending an alarm if the total cost of the purchase requisition is greater than the current budget balance of the said one department.

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (original): The expense management method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the alarm sent is a sonic alarm.

Claim 6 (original): The expense management method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the alarm sent is a visual alarm.

Claim 7 (original): The expense management method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

inquiring of the host about information stored in the host, the stored information including information relating to the at least one department, at least one article needed by any department, at least one supplier, and a history of expenses of each of the at least one department.

Claim 8 (original): The expense management method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

automatically generating a budget report, an expense report and an excess budget report.

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Claim 9 (currently amended): An expense management system for controlling a budget of at least one department in an organization, the expense management system comprising:

a basic information memory module for storing information about each of the at least one department, a cost of any article needed by any of the at least one department, at least one supplier, and at least one form;

a transaction process module for controlling purchase requisitions including re-submitted purchase requisitions, purchase activity and settlement of cost accounts;

an inquiring and analyzing module for inquiring and analyzing information in the basic information memory module;

a statistical reports module for collecting information in the basic information memory module and information related to costs; and

a system management module for managing information on users and changing data records in the basic information memory module.

Claim 10 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the basic information module comprises a department management module for managing basic information on any of the at least one department.

Claim 11 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the basic information module further comprises a cost item management module for managing cost items related to transactions of any of the at least one department.

Claim 12 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the basic information module further comprises a supplier management module for managing basic information on suppliers.

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Claim 13 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the basic information module further comprises a forms management module for storing basic forms used in transactions.

Claim 14 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the basic information module further comprises an article management module for storing information on articles purchased.

Claim 15 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the transaction process module comprises a budget and expense database for storing budget and expense information on any of the at least one department generated from transactions.

Claim 16 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the transaction process module further comprises a budget management program for controlling a budget of any of the at least one department.

Claim 17 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the transaction process module further comprises a transaction database for storing information generated from transactions.

Claim 18 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the transaction process module further comprises a transaction process program for executing specific transactions.

Claim 19 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the system management module comprises an updating sub-module for managing changes in department code of any of the at least one department.

Claim 20 (original): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the system management module further comprises a department

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budget locking sub-module for protecting a budget of any of the at least one department from being changed.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The expense management system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the system management module further comprises a form ~~lock-ing~~ locking sub-module for protecting forms used in transactions from being changed.

Claim 22 (currently amended) An expense management system comprising:

means for storing information of a budget of a department;

means for comparing a purchase order with the budget;

means for sending an alarm to the department if a monetary amount of said purchase order exceeds the budget or for processing the purchase order if not exceeds;

means for reprocessing said purchase order with a modified purchase order if said monetary amount of the purchase order exceeds the budge; and

means for updating the information before comparing the purchase order with the budget.